

get over half of what they make. They work to get it down.

We should change rates. When we change rates, my colleague from Minnesota mentioned, when we lower that tax on transactions, there are more transactions, and the Government makes more money. A lot of people are sitting on a lot of transactions. They would like to sell this land for that, and buy this land, or sell this stock and buy that stock, but they do not want to if Uncle Sam says, "We want 28 percent for that exchange." If you reduce the tax on that exchange, capital gains, you will have a lot more trading, a lot more buying and selling, and Government will make money on the transactions. The Government does not make money if people sit on the assets and do not trade the assets.

The point is, we can reduce the rates and generate more money for the Federal Government, and, I think, create a healthier, more stable economy.

So, Madam President, I make this statement urging my colleagues that this is the year that we can balance the budget and provide tax relief for American families. It should be a done deal. President Clinton campaigned for tax relief in 1992. He did not deliver. Actually he delivered just the opposite. In 1993, he passed the largest tax increase in history. In 1996, President Clinton campaigned for tax relief. Bob Dole, the Republican candidate, campaigned for tax relief. Both said they favored a \$500-tax-credit per child. You would think that would be a done deal. We passed that last year in the last Congress. President Clinton, unfortunately, vetoed it. You think it would be a done deal and now it would happen. I am not so sure everybody on the other side is willing to do that. Hopefully the President will.

I want to work with the President. I want it to become law. I do not have an interest in passing a tax bill just to have it vetoed. I want to pass a tax relief package this year that includes relief for American working families, that includes a reduction in capital gains, that includes estate tax relief, that includes incentives to save, IRAs, saving for retirement and education, I want to pass that and have it become law.

We look forward to working with the President and other Members in this body to pass a bipartisan package that can actually reduce taxpayers' taxes this year.

Madam President, I ask unanimous consent for an additional 5 minutes.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

GENERAL RENO'S ACTIONS UNDER THE INDEPENDENT COUNSEL LAW

Mr. NICKLES. Madam President, Attorney General Janet Reno's refusal to appoint an independent counsel to investigate the Clinton administration's highly questionable fundraising activities is based upon a shocking misinter-

pretation of the history, purpose, and requirements of the independent counsel law.

Ms. Reno states that the act "does not permit" invoking the independent counsel provisions unless there is "specific and credible evidence that a crime may have been committed by" a person covered by the law. In fact, the law requires that it be invoked whenever there is "information sufficient to constitute grounds to investigate" whether any person covered by the law may have violated Federal law. In short, even though General Reno acknowledges that there are "sufficient grounds to investigate," and even though that investigation is ongoing as I speak, she insists on controlling the investigation herself.

There remains no conceivable room for doubt that the Clinton administration, the Clinton-Gore campaign, and the Democratic National Committee engaged in fundraising practices that must be investigated. Virtually every editorial page in the Nation, from the Wall Street Journal to the New York Times, have demanded an investigation. Indeed, even the highest officials at the DNC have acknowledged that their practices were questionable and have agreed to return over \$3 million in contributions from foreign nationals, persons who gave contributions in the names of others, and contributions that may have come from foreign governments. And serious questions exist as to the use of Government property to solicit contributions and reward contributors.

The Vice President has admitted that he made numerous telephone calls from his official office using a Clinton-Gore campaign card to raise funds for the purpose of furthering the Clinton-Gore reelection campaign. Several of the recipients of those calls said that they felt pressured to contribute because they had ongoing business with the Government. Other telephone call recipients perceived these calls as constituting a shakedown. When a charge was recently aired that a prominent Member of Congress had pressured a potential contributor, a Federal grand jury investigation was launched within days of the allegation. Shouldn't the Vice President, or the President, who had pointedly not denied making fundraising calls from his office, be investigated as well?

The purpose of the independent counsel law is to entrust the investigation of these matters to someone who is not a subordinate of the official or officials being investigated. Yet General Reno refuses to invoke the independent counsel law until she is satisfied that laws have, in fact, been broken. That decision is not hers to make. That interpretation stands the law on its head.

It is impossible to defend the proposition, as the Attorney General attempts to do, that covered persons are not implicated in the investigation that she is presently conducting and which should be conducted by an inde-

pendent person. Documents released by the White House prove conclusively that the fundraising by the President's reelection campaign and by the DNC was run, on a day-to-day, hands-on basis by the President, himself, and his direct subordinate, Deputy Chief of Staff Harold Ickes. The DNC took orders directly from the President through Mr. Ickes. And the President and the Vice President and the First Lady were directly and substantially involved in all fundraising activities by the Clinton-Gore campaign and by the DNC, which was raising not soft money, but money that was raised for the purpose and used directly to fuel the President's reelection drive.

The Attorney General seems to feel that some of the laws implicated by these practices may not or should not be prosecuted. But that prosecutorial decision must not be made by someone who owes her position in Government to the official who may have possibly violated those laws. It does not answer this concern for the Attorney General to state that she is relying on career officials in the Department of Justice. As long as they are reporting to her, they are reporting to the President. She may not independently investigate the conduct of President Clinton any more than Attorney General Mitchell could investigate President Nixon or Attorney General Meese could investigate President Reagan.

I am not prejudging the results of the investigation which must be conducted into these matters. But I know that the practices that must be investigated may have violated Federal criminal laws, and that those violations may have been encouraged, inspired, directed, or condoned by the President or his immediate subordinates. The people of the United States are entitled to a prompt, full, fair, and independent investigation of these matters, and that investigation cannot be controlled by a person who serves at the pleasure of the President.

TAX RELIEF, TAX REFORM, AND IRS REFORM

Mr. CRAIG. Mr. President, an estimated 30 million taxpayers will file their Federal income tax returns today. They will be among the more than 100 million households filing returns so far this year.

Most of these households do not have charitable feelings about the process to which their Government has just subjected them.

Today, tax day, is the right day to call for tax relief, tax reform, and reform of the Internal Revenue Service.

The Tax Foundation has announced today that tax freedom day for 1997 will be May 9—128 days into the year and later than it has ever been in our taxpaying history.

Mr. President, our colleague, the senior Senator from West Virginia [Mr. BYRD], is a student of classical history. I read recently that subjects in some of